

September 14, 2017

Dear Parents/Guardians,

On Monday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, Blessed Sacrament School began its 93<sup>rd</sup> year in operation. Even before the church was constructed, the parishioners built a school so that the children of the parish could be instructed in the teachings and values of our faith. Over the years, many changes have taken place at our school. Additions have been added to the building. Lay teachers have taken over the responsibilities of teaching, and tuition is now the major source of the school budget. We have 538 students in pre-school through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The school budget is over 2.5 million dollars. About 60% of this money will come from tuition and fees. Another 20% will come from fundraising and the remaining money comes from the parish. The cost is roughly \$5,000 per student. Thus, even the parent that pays full tuition for their child (\$3,950) is being subsidized to the tune of \$1,000.

Why do we do that?...because this parish (and every Catholic) has a responsibility in passing on the faith to others. The school and the parish are not separate entities. The school is not independent. As Catholics, we believe faith is of value to all who seek salvation or the presence of God, and that we are called to love both God and our neighbor. Thus, helping teach the faith is not just a duty, but a joyful gift to God.

As we begin a new school year, I ask the following from our families:

One, I ask all our school families to practice their faith. That includes worship at Mass **every** Sunday. It also includes participation in parish life. It will show your gratitude for the generosity of others who are helping you provide a quality Catholic education for your children and more so, it will show your gratitude to God for the blessings He has given you.

Two, I ask you to generously support our school. The school adds much to the vitality and viability of the parish. We should all be grateful. Your financial support, your hours of volunteer work, your time spent in prayer and worship, your attendance at school events, does much to encourage the development of faith in our youth. We are fortunate to have the opportunity to help God in this mission.

Finally, I encourage all of us to continue our own education in the teachings and practices of the faith. A fruitful spiritual life is one that continues to grow in understanding of God and service to others. We are never too old to learn. By working together all of us will grow stronger in our faith and in our love for God and one another.

As parents, you have a serious responsibility to God to educate your children in their faith. You are the primary educators of your children in all things—including their faith. We are here to help you, but not replace you in this role. It will not happen without you. Please make that commitment today that you will do all in your power by word and example, to teach your child how to live by this faith. It is indeed the greatest gift you can give your child.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Jeff Grant, pastor